

IT HAPPENED IN OREM

A Bicentennial History of Orem, Utah

by

Orem Bicentennial History Committee

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appointed by the State Engineer. The law required records of all rights to be kept. It allowed existing rights to continue if they were being used beneficially. Now rights could be acquired by appropriation. Certain rules were applied to rights that could be apportioned. One rule was that rights were to be measured by a fractional part of the whole supply.

By 1902, Telluride Power Company had acquired power water rights and the Nunn brothers had built a plant on the Provo River about two miles up the canyon to create a market for power. They later built the Olmstead plant at the mouth of the canyon. The Provo Bench Canal and Irrigation Company trustees favored the plant and made agreements that protected their rights and secured certain benefits.

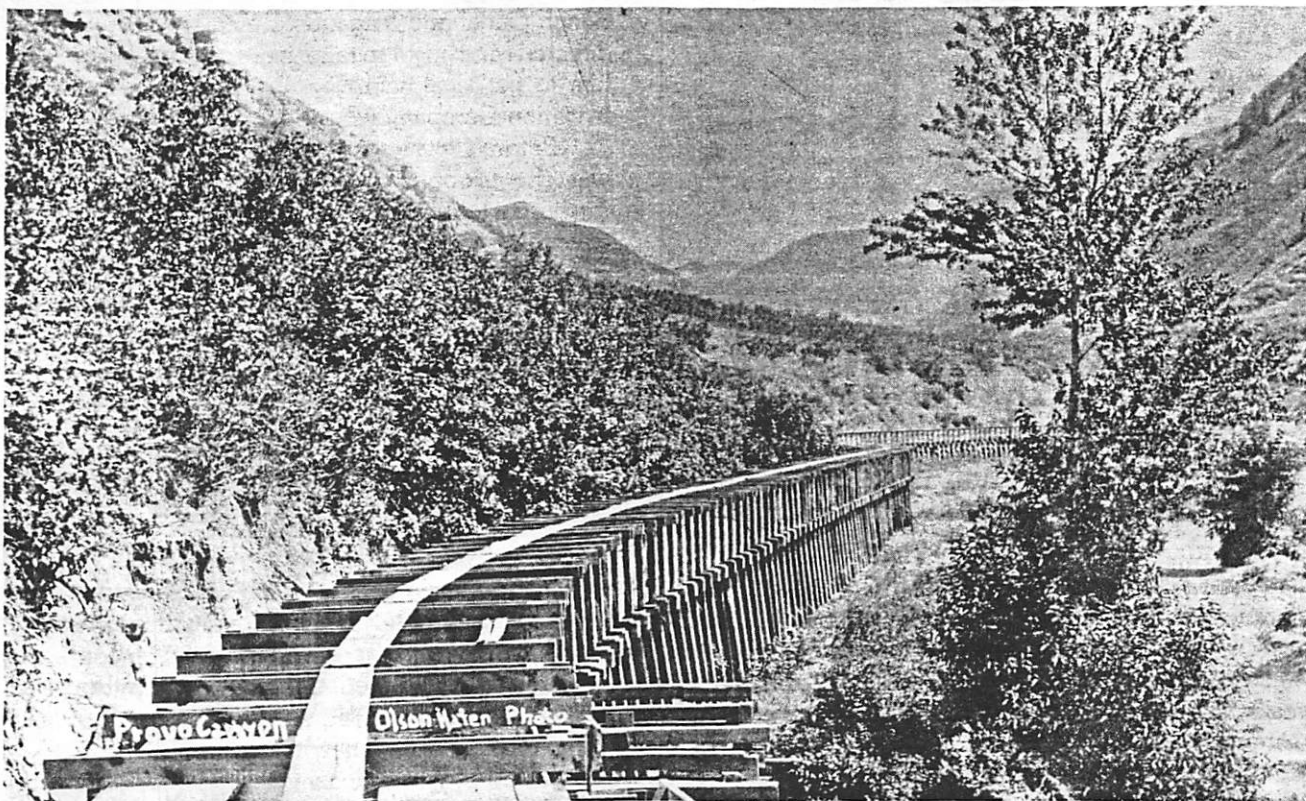
In the fall of 1913, the Provo Bench Canal and Irrigation Company hired a young civil engineer and stockholder, Frank Wentz, to conduct hydrographic studies of the land serviced by the company. Not long thereafter he was made commissioner over the Provo River system. Mr. Wentz remained Provo River Commissioner until his death in 1958.

Perhaps the most difficult time of Mr. Wentz's service was before the Deer Creek Reservoir supplemented and evened out yearly water supplies so that no crops were lost to drought. He was often confronted by desperate farmers who

begged for a little more water to save a crop or an orchard. His reply always left the decision to the petitioner: "I'd like to turn the water to you, but first, tell me, which of your neighbors do you want me to take it from?"

The Provo Bench Canal still provides water to farmers. Other canal companies also serve the benchland. Canal and laterals are lined tightly so that water, work, and expense are saved. Water is also saved by better turnout devices. New metal and concrete gates and weirs allow accurate measurements, and a daily record can be maintained. The flow of a stream several hundred miles away can be known by dialing a certain telephone number and listening to a recording device installed at a measuring point. One hundred fourteen years have passed since the first irrigation canal was completed and irrigation is now a technical science.

Orem's leaders have always understood and planned for future water needs. Because of this, Orem City is in a most favorable position with ample water for future growth. In 1976, Orem City Engineer, Russell Brown, reports that Orem owns all of Heiselt Springs, has the use of Alta Springs, owns stock in the Provo Bench Canal and Irrigation Company and also the Provo Reservoir Water Users Company, and owns several culinary wells.



OLD WATER FLUME, PROVO CANYON
Courtesy Theresia Clayton Pyne

The following table shows the results of the survey conducted in the year 2000. The data is presented in a tabular format, with the first column representing the year and the subsequent columns representing the number of respondents for each category. The categories are: "Total", "Male", "Female", "Age 18-24", "Age 25-34", "Age 35-44", "Age 45-54", "Age 55-64", and "Age 65+".

Year	Total	Male	Female	Age 18-24	Age 25-34	Age 35-44	Age 45-54	Age 55-64	Age 65+
2000	100	50	50	10	20	30	20	10	10

The data indicates that the survey was conducted with a balanced distribution of respondents across various age groups and genders. The total number of respondents was 100, with 50 males and 50 females. The age distribution shows a relatively even spread across the different age categories, with the highest number of respondents in the 35-44 age group.